

Message Text

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TAGS: CASC NO (LEVERING,WILLIAM)

SUBJECT: PROTECTION AND WELFARE

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE HEADLINED "IN THE OPINION OF NOR-
WEGIAN EXPERTS,THE ARCTIC VENTURE IS PURE MADNESS" APPEARED
IN THE JULY 30 MORNING EDITION OF AFTENPOSTEN,NORWAY'S
LARGEST NEWSPAPER:

"I WOULD TERM THE VENTURE TO BE ATTEMPTED BY THE AMERICAN,
WALTER LEVERING, AS PURE MADNESS," SAYS SUPERVISOR OF THE
SHIPPING CONTROL BOARD, MAGNAR ERNSTSEN, IN TROMSO, TO
AFTENPOSTEN'S REPORTER. THE AMERICAN ADVENTURER IS PLANNING
TO SAIL THROUGH THE NORTH EAST PASSAGE IN A 41-FOOT OCEAN-
GOING YACHT, "NORDSTJERNEN". HE IS TO UNDERTAKE THE VOYAGE
SINGLE-HANDED AS HIS CREW, TWO NORWEGIANS, DROPPED OUT IN
THE LAST MINUTE. THE VOYAGE STARTED FROM THE ISLAND OF
HANKO IN THE BEGINNING OF JULY, AND ON HIS WAY TO TROMSO
HE LOST THE AUTOMATIC PILOT. NEVERTHELESS, LEVERING WHO
HAS SET OUT FROM TROMSO BOUND FOR VARDØ, IS FULLY DETER-
MINED TO CARRY THE VENTURE TO ITS CONCLUSION. A NUMBER OF
ARCTIC EXPLORERS AND EXPERTS ON ARCTIC MATTERS HAVE DESCRIBED
THE PROJECT AS PURE LUNACY AND ARE OF THE OPINION
THAT THE AUTHORITIES OUGHT RIGHTLY TO INTERVENE." "THERE
ARE NO PROVISIONS IN THE LAW TO PREVENT MR. LEVERING SAILING
OFF," REMARKS MR. CARL A. WENDT,CHIEF OF BODO POLICE, ALSO OFFICER IN
CHARGE OF THE SEA RESCUE SERVICE FOR NORTH NORWAY, TO AFTENPOSTEN.
EVEN WITH THE POSSIBILITY IN VIEW

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THAT MR. LEVERING SHOULD COME TO GRIEF, NECESSITATING A LARGE-

SCALE RESCUE MANEUVER AT THE RISK OF LOSS IN HUMAN LIVES AS WELL AS MONEY, WE HAVE NO AUTHORITY TO STOP HIM." "HAD IT BEEN A CASE OF A NORWEGIAN SUBJECT, THE MATTER WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT," RELATES MR. ERNSTSEN. "THERE ARE REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE TYPE OF EQUIPMENT WITH WHICH A NORWEGIAN VESSEL MUST BE FITTED OUT FOR SAILING THROUGH ARCTIC WATERS. AS THE MAN CONCERNED IS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN, THERE IS LITTLE WE CAN DO ABOUT IT. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE DIRECTORATE OF SHIPPING WHERE IT IS DECLARED THAT NO ONE BUT AMERICAN AUTHORITIES ARE IN THE POSITION TO PREVENT MR. LEVERING FROM CARRYING ON WITH HIS VENTURE. IN NORWAY THAT AUTHORITY IS THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY."

IT WAS ARRANGED THAT THE POLICE AT TROMSO, TOGETHER WITH THE SHIPPING CONTROL BOARD, WERE TO HAVE HAD AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. LEVERING LAST TUESDAY, BUT BY THEN HE HAD ALREADY LEFT THE TOWN. HE PLANS TO SAIL ALONG THE COAST OF THE PROVINCE OF FINMARK AS FAR AS VARDØ, TO SET OUT TO SEA AT THAT POINT. CHIEF OF POLICE AT VARDØ, ARNE EGGESVIK, STATES THAT SO FAR THEY ARE UNACQUAINTED WITH THIS MATTER. IF AND WHEN DIRECTIVES ARE RECEIVED, THE POLICE AT VARDØ WILL UNDERTAKE THE APPROPRIATE PREPARATIONS. MR. EGGESVIK RECKONS THAT THE VOYAGE FROM TROMSO TO VARDØ WILL TAKE ABOUT TWO DAYS IN THE TYPE OF CRAFT MR. LEVERING IS SAILING.

ALMOST ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, THE SWEDISH EXPLORER ADOLF E. NORDENSKIÖLD, WAS THE FIRST MAN TO SAIL THROUGH THE NORTHEAST PASSAGE FROM VADSO TO THE EAST COAST OF ALASKA. HE SAILED WITH A FULLBLOWN CREW AND ACCOMPANIED BY ESCORT VESSELS, ABOARD THE STEAMSHIP VEGA, AND VOYAGE TOOK TWO YEARS. MR. LEVERING, WHO IS 65 YEARS OLD, RECKONS TO USE THREE MONTHS ON THIS VENTURE AND IS DEVOID OF ALL PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF ARCTIC CONDITIONS. ALSO ROALD AMUNDSEN IN HIS SPECIALLY CONSTRUCTED SHIP MAUD SPENT TWO WINTERS IN THE ARCTIC ON HIS EXPEDITION. THE FIRST LAP OF THE 600 NAUTICAL MILES GOES ACROSS THE OPEN BARENTS SEA AS FAR AS THE KARA STRAITS, DIVIDING THE ISLAND OF NOVAJA SEMLJA FROM THE RUSSIAN MAINLAND. THE YACHT NORDSTJERNEN IS EQUIPPED WITH A RADIO ABOARD" IN REPLY TO PRESS INQUIRIES, CONCERNING ALLEGED STATE-UNCLASSIFIED

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MENT MADE BY MR. FLEISCHER, LEGAL ADMINISTRATOR IN THE DIRECTORATE OF SHIPPING, THE EMBASSY SAID THAT NEITHER THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE NOR "THE FOREIGN SERVICE" HAS THE AUTHORITY TO TAKE ACTIONS WHICH, THOUGH THEY APPEAR TO BE NECESSARY FOR THE PERSON'S WELL-BEING, ARE OPPOSED BY THE INDIVIDUAL. AN IMPASSE OF THIS NATURE IS FREQUENTLY RESOLVED ONLY BY ACTION TAKEN BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES. BUCHANAN

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